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YELLOW



Yellow Jackets Volleyball Coach Greg Smith

BY MARK WOMACK '82

In June, Greg Smith was announced as the new Head Women's Volleyball Coach at Cedarville University, after having spent the previous 20-plus years coaching at the NCAA Division I level. For the past nine seasons, he served as head coach at the University of Toledo.

The Westmont College graduate was also the head coach at Virginia Tech, sandwiched in between stops as an assistant at Ohio State and later Notre Dame.

Smith shares about his path to Cedarville and what he wants Lady Jacket volleyball to be known for.



At the end of the day, we're all coaching volleyball, no matter the level. It's the same principles. Even at the DI level, winning and losing isn't life. There's got to be a balance, even more so at the Division II level.

That's one thing I learned at Notre Dame from our head coach. She had complete balance. The most important thing in her life was her walk with Christ, followed by her family, and volleyball was third. Watching

her remain balanced while developing a successful program taught me a lot. Teams are made up of different mindsets and different skill sets. The experiences that I've had have taught me how to connect with the players and encourage a competitive drive.

Why Cedarville University?

I wanted to be part of a Christian university. I went to a Christian college myself, and I thought it would be a great opportunity. I've always wanted to be in an environment like this and be a part of this culture. At previous places where I've been, you don't see the spiritual growth that you do here, and it's something I wanted to experience professionally.

What's your impression of the student-athletes?

We have a great group of girls that want to learn and work hard! Our first time on the court together was August, and they knew they had lots to learn. They're easy to coach and a wonderful group. I love who they are as people. It allows me to enjoy coaching more just because of who they are.

What experience do you bring from Division I that can benefit Cedarville?

Division I is a very competitive level. I've coached against high-level coaches and players. Learning how to train and coach against that level has given me a lot of confidence coming in. I've been pushed by the best, challenged to be better, developed my philosophy, and grown.

What do you envision Cedarville volleyball becoming?

The culture has already been set, and we obviously want that to continue. That's important to me. I also want us to compete at the national level, and that means we're going to have to get a lot better as a program. God has given us a platform, and I don't want it just to be known in the Midwest, but nationally. I want people to see that we are a Christian program that also plays at a very, very high level. My desire is that we have the best of both worlds.

Using our talents to the fullest and bringing in the right people will help us get there. There's unlimited potential because of who Cedarville University is. There aren't many schools like us. Parents and players are looking for places like us. Our previous coaches have built the history, and we want to continue to build upon that foundation.

Mark Womack '82 is Sports Information Director for Cedarville University.